

REMARKS

Careful consideration has been given by the applicants to the Examiner's comments and rejection of the claims as set forth in the outstanding Office Action, and favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application, as amended, is earnestly solicited.

In accordance with the Examiner's request, Figure 10 of the drawings has been amended by revising reference numeral "111" to read --110--. This provides the distinction between the burner and the furnace body.

Applicants note the Examiner's withdrawal of Claims 1-6 as being directed to a non-elected invention. In this connection, applicants note the Examiner's rejection of Claim 1 as being indefinite under 35 U.S.C. §112. However, inasmuch as, presently Claims 1-6 have been withdrawn from consideration, applicants note that there is no requirement to amend Claim 1 in a withdrawn condition. Consequently, that particular formality can be addressed upon consideration of Claim 1 in due course.

Applicants further note the formal grounds of rejection of Claims 8, 9 and 12 and appropriate amendatory action has been taken throughout the claims to obviate these particular matters. Furthermore, Claim 12 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, rendering moot the Examiner's objections that a number of apparatuses are not disclosed in the drawings. Consequently, no further discussion of that point is considered to be necessary.

Applicants further note the various formal objections to the remaining claims, and appropriate amendments have been implemented to provide correct antecedent terminology and also to eliminate minor ambiguities in the claims.

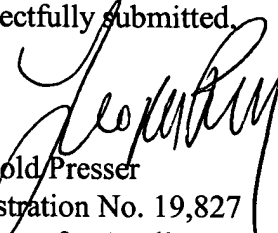
Furthermore, a new Claim 13 has been added relating to the aspect that the furnace body is a reverberatory furnace. That particular terminology is clearly supported by the disclosure having reference to the description on page 7, line 11 and in Figure 1 of the drawings.

Concerning the Examiner's rejection of Claims 7-12 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being obvious of U.S. Publication No. 2002/0053306, applicants respectfully traverse the foregoing inasmuch as the present application is a continuation-in-part application, which is based on the disclosure of the U.S. Publication No. 2002/0053306 (Serial No. 09/896,203). Accordingly, inasmuch as priority of that particular publication and the underlying application thereof is claimed in the present application, the publication cited by the Examiner does not constitute a valid reference under 35 U.S.C. §103, and the rejection of the present application on the basis of the foregoing is respectfully requested to be withdrawn.

Accordingly, inasmuch as the applicants have amended the application to meet all of the Examiner's requirements, and inasmuch as the publication cited by the Examiner is not considered to be an applicable reference, the early issuance of the Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

However, in the event that the Examiner has any queries concerning the instantly submitted Amendment, applicant's attorney respectfully requests that he be accorded the courtesy of possibly a telephone conference to discuss any matters in need of attention.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment: Replacement Sheet and Annotated Sheet showing changes to Figure 10